

Baked Apples



standuponit
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MOOD: 😊 full

MUSIC: Andrew Bird - Oh No

Wash the last two Macoun apples you found at the farmer's market. They're probably starting to get softer-textured and sweeter, which is what happens as the season draws to an end. For this application, that's a feature, not a bug.

Core them with a paring knife (what I had) or a corer (which would have been easier, but I found mine at a junk store and it was probably ten years old then, so it wasn't really a surprise when the handle disintegrated). Leave the bottom half-inch or so of the core intact. (And how, you ask, do you do that? Unless you can dissect apples with your mind, really, you can't. But it's an amusing goal to shoot for, and if you cut all the way through, it won't hurt anything.)

Right about now, you'll want to turn your oven on and set it to 350 degrees.

Pare a little more off the inside of the hole you've made in each apple, to make sure you got all the fibrous bits and to make room for the stuffins--say, an inch and a half diameter. Also pare off the peel around the top of the hole so the uppermost part of the apple is nekkid.

Chop 1/8 cup of roasted or raw almonds pretty small--nothing larger than 1/4". Put in a bowl, and add 1/8 cup raisins, dark or golden. Add 1/2 tsp cinnamon, 1/8 tsp of ginger, and 1/8 tsp nutmeg. If you like tart apples and yours aren't tart enough, splash in 1 tablespoon of lemon juice or cider vinegar. Finally, pour in 1/8 cup of maple syrup. (You can use brown sugar, but mine resembled a nicely-fired adobe brick and I didn't want to derail the project for the time it would take to soften it.)

If I have bread crumbs, I'll sometimes throw in a tablespoon or two of those, just to make everything clingy. They're not necessary, though; this is a really good dessert for anyone who can't eat wheat.

Mix all that nummy stuff and admire the smell.

Put your prepped apples, hole side up, in a baking dish as small as you've got that will still hold both apples. Spoon the nummy smelly mixture into the holes in the apples, packing lightly. It won't all fit. Pile it on top of the apples, using spoon and fingers, as best you can. Some of it will fall off into the pan. This is also a feature.

Settle a generous dab of butter (okay, or margarine) on top of the teetering pile of stuffing on each apple. I use a teaspoon per apple, but I'm like that. Drizzle maple syrup over the top of both apples.

Bring 3/4 cup of water to a boil and pour into the baking dish around the apples (but don't pour it over them!). Put the dish in your preheated oven, set the timer for 30 minutes, and go away so the increasingly OMG WHAT IS THAT AND HOW SOON CAN I EAT IT smell doesn't drive you nuts. In an apartment the size of mine, this means going to the laundromat or something.

When the timer goes zzzzzzzzing!, check the apples for doneness by poking them with a fork. They should be soft, but not mushy. Put them in a bowl and pour the hot syrup and fallen raisins and nuts from the bottom of the dish over them. (Actually, you want to put them in two bowls and find a friend to help you eat them, or maybe put one in the fridge to eat for breakfast, because most of you aren't me.) They are intense, and even more so with either vanilla ice cream or plain yogurt.

Failure modes:

1. The apples are still hard. Put 'em back in the dish and bake them for another ten minutes. But watch them carefully because...
2. The tops are burnt. Thirty minutes. The raisins sticking out the top will get puffy and sort of caramelized, but that's different from burnt. If your oven heats unevenly, try basting the apples with the nummy juice in the dish a few times during the baking period; it'll keep the tops moist.

TAGS: [recipes](#)



This looks like a
good idea.

...

This.

...

Little guy's not
bad.

Gotta teach RHex
to smear.

14 comments



 themagdalen

November 20 2008, 02:15:05 UTC COLLAPSE

I really appreciate "failure modes" as a coda to recipes.



 reneears

November 20 2008, 02:23:19 UTC COLLAPSE

That reads so enticingly, I might have to get some apples tomorrow. This reminds me of a dessert we used to make in Girl Scouts, lo these many moons ago, although it was much simpler. Core apples, put cinnamon, sugar, and butter in the middle. Wrap the apples in foil and place in the coals of a fire while you eat dinner. Unwrap afterward, burning fingertips, and consume while slightly too hot. Yum.

I bet honey would work well as a syrup substitution.



 txanne

November 20 2008, 02:44:22 UTC COLLAPSE

You, sir, are the BEST text-based cooking teacher EVER.



 calanthe_b

November 20 2008, 03:06:23 UTC COLLAPSE

That's...almost enough to make me wish I could still eat apples. And had something more than a dinky little toaster oven to cook in.



 themaskmaker

November 20 2008, 03:24:40 UTC COLLAPSE

Hrrrm. When I'm trying to leave 1/2" of the bottom intact when I'm coring an apple, I set the apple on the cutting board, then stand the knife next to it and measure the apple's height against the blade. Then I raise the knife 1/2" and put my thumb on the flat of the blade at that point. Then, as I'm coring, I use my thumb as a sort of stop bit, and don't go deeper than that.




 standuponit

November 20 2008, 04:35:14 UTC COLLAPSE


But when you pull the core out, it doesn't either break off halfway down or pull the uncut half inch out anyway? Sneering at you all the while? That's my experience.* (Which is how I know that part's not a deal-breaker.)

*Well, maybe not with the sneering.

 [themaskmaker](#)
[November 20 2008, 14:53:31 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Once I've made the initial cylindrical (or sort of) cut, then I angle the blade about 40 degrees and cut out the core in pieces. Yeah, yeah, I know, it's not as beautiful or satisfying as pulling out a single, cylindrical core, but if Norm Abrams does it in his wood work, it must be ok. All praise St. Norm...


Also, when you remove the core in pieces like that, it can't sneer.

 [inaurolillium](#)
[November 20 2008, 06:50:20 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)


Nom nom nom.

I don't know Macouns. I know you've mentioned them before, but I'm lazy. Would you mind telling me what they're like, so I know if honeycrisps will work?

Also, I have honeycrisp cider. Envy me.

 [standuponit](#)
[November 20 2008, 17:01:18 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Macouns are a little more tart, and softer-textured; classic old-fashioned apple. Honeycrisps will totally work; they might need a little more time in the oven, depending on their size, so poke 'em at thirty minutes and see how they're doing.

 [danaoshee](#)
[November 20 2008, 06:56:31 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

I do the lazy version of this:

Take one apple.

Cut in half and remove all core with a paring knife. In the process, make a nice little scooped out hollow in each half.

Arrange apple halves in a microwave safe bowl cut side up.

Fill hollow spot in the center of the apple with brown sugar, cinnamon, and whatever other spices sound yummy. (or some butter, your raisin idea would work well, etc.)

Zap in microwave until apples are as soft as you like them.

Consume, trying to wait until they're no longer hot enough to burn your tongue.

Failure modes:

Apples aren't soft enough yet. Keep zapping.

Apples have achieved something close to applesauce texture. Reflect that this isn't so bad and eat your yummy applesauce. Zap less next time.



[troubadourasong](#)

[November 20 2008, 14:29:03 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Yummy!

Lucky me, I just bought apples. No Macouns here, but lovely [Boskoop](#) - did you ever hear of them? They are good for cakes and I look forward to trying them baked.



[sprrwhwk](#)

[November 21 2008, 00:32:53 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Drat, I just put my last Macouns in the slow-cooker for applesauce. Oh, woe is me. Whatever shall I do. Clearly I will need to buy more so I can make this. :-)

(Slightly crazy ideas that turned out delicious: while grilling pork chops, toss some halved and cored apples on the grill, cut side down. Flip about the same time you flip the pork chops. Serve together. You could add spices if you want, but you don't really need to. Absolutely delicious, and so simple! :-)



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[November 21 2008, 00:37:39 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Also tasty if a grill is not available: take your pork chops, smear both sides with mustard, sear both sides in a cast iron pan, toss whole peeled garlic cloves and sliced apples in the pan, squeeze a lemon over the whole mess, and toss in a 350-degree oven until cooked through.

yum!



[blackcoat](#)

[December 3 2008, 02:52:42 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

I make porkchops by tossing a sweet white onion, and some apples, sliced whole, about a quarter inch thick, into the pan. spread out until onion/apple are covering the whole bottom of pan.

Cook until the onions are *just* starting to carmalize.

Toss chops in on TOP of onion/apple mix. ittle bit of salt, and some mustard seed go in, now.

Wait until side one is good and cooked. Flip, by flipping EVERYTHING, so chops wind up against pan, apples/onions wind up covering.

Sear. Toss everything into serving dish, deglaze pan with a good slug of cider and squeeze half a lemon over the top. Reduce for five minutes or so, pour over chops, serve.

Be hailed as master.

Failure modes:

Apples fell apart when you tried to flip everything: Cook them less before adding chops. Or on softer heat. Or slice thicker. Any work.

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